Forestry Commission England

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norway spruce cone
Picea Excelsa

THE History OF THE ARBORETUM

Lynford Arboretum was established by the Forestry Commission in the late 1940s on land that was formerly part of the Lynford Hall estate. At that time the Hall was a Forestry Training School and it was the trainee foresters who planted the specimen trees which are the basis of the collection of conifers.

brown bear skull
Ursus arctos

Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk shows extensive ornamental grounds around the second hall, built by Sir James Nelthorpe in 1717 with 'lawns, canal, ponds, sheets of water, cold bath, plantations, woods pumphouse and three cottages'.

Lynford already had a tradition of tree planting. In 1841 a visitor recorded that the estate was 'celebrated for its noble and extensive plantations. Its oak and elms are of magnificent description but its chiefest trees are the silver fir which so overtop the woods that they may be recognised at a great distance'.

The history of human habitation in the Lynford Area stretches back 60,000 years to a time when Neanderthal man hunted woolly mammoth, woolly rhinoceros, brown bear and reindeer.

wooly mammoth
Mammuthus primigenius

Lynford Hall Country House Hotel

The hall built for Lyne-Stephens had six reception rooms, fifty bedrooms, a coach house, stables, housing for the servants and its own private gas works.

Lynford is the Old English word for 'flax ford' and the settlement here was listed in Domesday but by 1489 it was uninhabited. The best known owner of Lynford Hall was Mr Stephen Lyne-Stephens. When he purchased the estate in 1856, the sales particulars made special mention of the timber; 'Oak Larch Beech and Elm all of which grow to an unusual length and are noted for their straightness of bole'. He continued the tree planting tradition and many of the existing parkland trees were planted during his ownership.

Lyne-Stephens also rebuilt the 1720s house as a Jacobean-style mansion, designed by architect William Burn. This is the building you can see today. Lyne-Stephens' family fortune came from importing Portuguese glass. He was considered to be one of the county's wealthiest commoners.

During the Second World War, Lynford Hall was a hospital for officers. It was used as a setting for the TV series 'Allo'Allo and Dad's Army and is now a hotel and business centre.

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Follow the **Forest Code**

- Guard against all risks of fire.
- Protect and respect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Keep dogs under control.
- Take your litter home.
- Make no unnecessary noise.
- Take only memories away.

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Lynford Arboretum